

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 061923
ORIGIN NODS-00

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DRAFTED BY: S/S:LREDDY
APPROVED BY: S/S-MR REDDY

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 061923

NODIS
WHITE HOUSE FOR DR. BRZEZINSKI

FOLLOWING REPEAT KINSHASA 2496 ACTION SECSTATE DTD 19 MAR

QTE

S E C R E T KINSHASA 2496

NODIS

FOR SHAUFELE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, PFOR, PINR, CG
SUBJECT: MERCENARIES

REF: KINSHASA 2474

1. YOU WILL HAVE NOTICED THAT THE REFERENCED MESSAGE RAISED
THE POSSIBILITY THAT MOBUTU MIGHT CALL IN MERCENARIES. I DID
SO BECAUSE I HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE IT IS IN THE CARDS. FIRST
OF ALL, KNOWING THE HISTORY HERE, YOU CAN APPRECIATE THAT
MOBUTU'S LOGIC WOULD RUN IN THAT DIRECTION, ESPECIALLY SINCE HE

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KNOWS THAT HIS WESTERN FRIENDS WILL NOT SEND TROOPS. I WOULD ALSO
POINT OUT THAT FROM THE FIRSTNEWS OF THE ATTACK MOBUTU LABELED
THE INVADERS AS MERCENARIES THUS LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR AN
EVENTUAL GOZ HIRING OF SAME.

2. SECONDLY, WE HAVE RECEIVED SEVERAL INDICATIONS THAT SUCH A
RECOMMENDATION HAS BEEN PUT TO HIM BY SOME OF HIS ADVISORS.

THEN, TEMPLESMAN TOLD ME THAT MOBUTU INDICATED TO HIM THAT HE WAS THINKING OF BRINGING IN FRENCH MERCS UNDER GECAMINE COVER. THE FRENCH AMBASSADOR HERE CAME CLOSE TO CONFIRMING THIS, EXPRESSING CONVICTION THAT MERCENARIES WOULD BE ESSENTIAL TO DEFEND THE SHABA.

3. LASTLY, AT THE END OF MY MEETING WITH MOBUTU ON MAR 18-- DURING WHICH HE ASKED ME TO ASSURE PRESIDENT CARTER THAT HE WOULD NEVER REQUEST US TROOPS--MOBUTU MADE A RATHER VAGUE REFERENCE TO THE DIFFERENCE IN HIS MIND BETWEEN FOREIGN GOVERNMENT TROOPS AND PRIVATELY HIRED MERCENARIES. I DID NOT PICK UP THE BAIT, AND INSTEAD LIMITED MY RESPONSE TO RECALLING THAT THE WHOLE QUESTION OF MERCENARIES HAD BEEN QUITE CONTROVERSIAL DURING THE ANGOLAN WAR.

4. I FLAG THIS TO YOUR ATTENTION BECAUSE OF THE OBVIOUS POLICY COMPLICATIONS IT COULD POSE FOR US. IN REFTEL I RECOMMENDED THAT WE MOVE AHEAD NOW WITH LIMITED M-16 AMMUNITION SUPPLY BUT BE PREPARED TO MAKE IT ABSOLUTELY CLEAR TO MOBUTU THAT IF MERCENARIES ARE IN FACT USED, WE COULD NOT ALLOW THEIR HAVING ACCESS TO ANY US SUPPLIED ARMS. WHILE I REALIZE APPLICATION IN THE FIELD MIGHT PROVE DIFFICULT, THIS WOULD SEEM TO PROVIDE US WITH A DEFENSIBLE POSITION ON THIS ISSUE FOR THE DELIVERY OF M-16 AMMUNITION AND WHATEVER OTHER ARMS WE MIGHT EVENTUALLY DECIDE ON.

CUTLER UNQTE VANCE

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